

# Christianity and Crisis

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## Our Mistaken Approach to Communism

THE Federal Council statement on the international crisis, which we publish elsewhere in this issue, is one of the most important warnings against the present drift of public opinion and the assumptions that now control national policy which has so far appeared from any source.

The crystallization of public opinion around the military approach to the threat of Communism is a disastrous mistake. Except for the Marshall Plan, which in itself is a remarkable example of constructive statesmanship fitted to the occasion, our national leadership seems to reflect the outlook of the armed services. The fact that President Truman has no decisive foreign policy of his own and the fact that he has lost authority in recent months have made it easy for the representatives of the Department of Defense to dominate policy.

This is not written on the assumption that our military strength is unimportant in giving a sense of security to those who must resist Communism with the knowledge that the Red Army is not very far away. Nor is it written in criticism of our army, navy and air force. It is their business to prepare for the worst eventualities and it is quite natural for them to press their case as strongly as possible. But it is entirely wrong to allow them to determine over-all national policy and to allow them to be the spokesmen of the government in molding public opinion. The dominance of the military in government was one of the chief criticisms which we always made of the government of Japan, but there is an approximation to that same situation in Washington today. This is not said in criticism of General Marshall who as Secretary of State has shown a capacity to transcend the military perspective.

The military control of government and this molding of public opinion by those who think in military terms is always a threat to sound policy, but at the present time this is peculiarly the case for it leads to a false estimate of the nature of the conflict between Russia and the West.

We have been misled by the place of Czechoslovakia in this crisis and have assumed that we are back in the days of Munich when Czechoslovakia

was at the center of events. In many ways the analogy is false. Czechoslovakia was peculiarly vulnerable to Russia's type of aggression because of her Slavic background, her strong native Communism and the fear of Germany which easily binds her to Russian policy. But more important is the essential difference between the power of Communism and the power of National Socialism. We may say that Communism has its greatest strength in its propaganda appeal to the workers and peasants in many countries. Its military power is auxiliary; whereas National Socialism had its greatest strength in the military power of Germany and its propaganda was auxiliary. Without being lulled into indifference about our own military strength, the American people need to see these things with a true sense of proportion and prepare themselves to resist the extension of Communism at the point where the Communist strength is greatest.

The Federal Council, in its statement, emphasizes that if war does come its results are certain to be the opposite of what we might intend to accomplish. The American people should spend more time imagining what would happen if we were victorious in war after the complete disorganization of Europe, including Russia, and the destruction of many of its centers of population. Even if our own country remained relatively strong and undestroyed, where would we be? Could we take on the reorganization of Europe and could we add Russia to Germany as an occupied country? How ripe for freedom would Europe be? Even if Communism were destroyed as an organized movement, would not the anarchy, hunger and despair after such a war prepare people for new and more destructive totalitarian movements?

The dread prospects of either victory or defeat in war must not tempt us to capitulate to Russia and Communism. It must rather prompt us to double our resistance to the extension of Russian and Communistic power by such means as will guarantee both peace and the ultimate triumph of the democratic cause. We have made the right kind of new beginning in the European Recovery Pro-

gram. We cannot afford to have that new effort swamped by military policies which do not take either the real character of the opposing force or the awful consequences of military victory over it

into consideration. We suggest that the American churches locally and in their assemblies follow the lead of the Federal Council and call both popular and official opinion back to sanity. J. C. B.

## A Positive Program for Peace

Statement Approved by the Executive Committee of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

*Our people should not tolerate any complacency about war. War would engulf all in misery and would bring other consequences quite the opposite of our intentions.*

SOME have come to look upon "a preventive war" as an acceptable means of settling the present international conflict. Such a state of mind we unqualifiedly condemn.

The last war ended with the dropping of two bombs which alone killed over 100,000 persons and shattered the lives of many more. New war would plunge the world into utter misery. Whatever the military result, there would be an intensification of the misery which makes men willing to exchange freedom for dictatorship. Circumstances may at times make forcible resistance a lesser evil than surrender, but no man should be deluded into thinking that new war will achieve the ends for which he would profess to be fighting.

*Our people should combat a mood of hysteria or blind hatred.*

There is always danger that in the face of alarming events hatred or fear will arouse mass emotion and drive people into doing foolhardy things. A free society can survive only as its members have the self-control and self-restraint to protect themselves against that mood. So, our citizens who believe in their free society and want to preserve it must exercise sober self-control and exert themselves to stop others who would spread hysteria, whether for attack or for surrender. Some officials may think that even necessary legislation can be obtained only by frightening the American people. Others may feel that they are peculiarly qualified to exercise political leadership and that they can best ride into power on a wave of emotion. Those who influence public opinion may feel that sensationalism is needed to arouse and alert the American people. Those who do such things are following the doctrine that it is possible to get good by doing evil. The fact is that panic started for one purpose seldom stops until it has overshot the chosen mark.

There are features of Soviet conduct, and indeed features of our own national conduct, which are evil and which we should hate. But hatred of evil is very different from the hatred of people as a group.

Those who stand on the brink of disaster cannot safely indulge in emotions which make them unstable and unreasoning.

*Our people should reject fatalism about war. War is not inevitable. If it should come, it would be because of conditions that men could have changed.*

There is no irresistible tide that is carrying men to destruction. The evil forces at work are man-made and they can be man-changed. We do not believe that any government, whether our own or the Soviet, now wants war or is committed to war. Soviet leaders do have a global program which, if carried out in the intolerant and coercive manner of the past two years, is likely to lead to war. However, it can be dealt with by counter-measures of peace. It seems that the Soviet program will be aggressively pushed to a danger point especially where the following conditions prevail: *first*, where economies are weak; *second*, where the working people can be made to believe that proletarian dictatorship offers their best hope of increased welfare; and *third*, where man can be terrorized. To quote from Stalin, Soviet Communism strikes when and where the forces opposed have "exposed their practical bankruptcy." Where that condition is not found, aggressive Soviet action is suspended. The way to prevent war, therefore, is to change the conditions which tempt men to reckless and dangerous activities.

*Our people should not rely primarily on military strategy to meet Communist aggression. Such reliance is more apt to bring war than prevent it. There should be greater concentration on positive programs of an economic, social, political and moral character.*

In times of international crisis men tend to look to military measures as a means of salvation. That is happening in America now. Nearly a year ago Secretary Marshall put forward the statesmanlike idea of the European Recovery Plan. In many respects, however, our recent international policy seems to have been much dominated by military thinking. Such domination increases the risk of war.

In present conditions of international anarchy,

where international law and international police power are lacking, national military strength is necessary, while we continually strive for the multilateral reduction and control of armaments through the United Nations. But the main defenses of what we treasure are to be found in non-military measures which will change the conditions favoring the spread of despotism. To provide those defenses is not the task for military advisers. Therefore, the American people, in conformity with the principle of democratic government, should not permit policy making to pass predominantly into the hands of those who think primarily in military terms, as seems to be the case today. Our people and government should not feel satisfied with merely military measures but should diligently develop and carry through programs of an economic, social, political and moral character. Thus, the real security of the United States and of the world may be safeguarded, and war may be averted.

*Our people should press for positive programs which have immediate possibilities for peace and justice. They could, for example, quickly move toward:*

- a. Greater economic well-being throughout the world*
- b. Greater emphasis on increasing social welfare*
- c. Greater observance of human rights, to check terrorism*
- d. Greater use of processes of international conversation and negotiation*

We believe that the positive programs which we here propose by way of illustration flow directly from our Christian faith and its requirements for relations of mutual helpfulness and good will among men. In urging at this time economic assistance to those in need, increased opportunity for human welfare, and greater observance of the rights and freedoms which are claimed by virtue of man's dignity in God's sight, we are setting forth tasks which should at all times command the support of our Christian people. We are convinced that both the inherent right of these steps and their direct bearing upon the present international crisis will commend them to all men of good will.

Primary responsibility for the technical aspects of programs rests, of course, upon government and political leadership. Nevertheless, our present appeal to our people to press for economic, social, political and moral programs for peace would not be convincing unless we could point to genuine possibilities of this character.

a. One of the conditions which tempt Soviet leadership to aggressive action is the prevalence of economic distress. The Foreign Assistance Act just passed by Congress can serve greatly to change these conditions in Europe and also to some extent in China. The European Recovery Plan, which that

Act incorporates, shows the immense possibilities which reside in non-military resourcefulness and action. The constructive objectives of this Plan have been strongly backed by our churches. It has now been enacted into law, and action under it is beginning. Such action ought to do more than provide temporary relief. It should, and can, work to change economic conditions into those needed for a great revival of hope and creative effort.

b. Another condition which tempts Soviet leaders to aggressive action is the possibility of making men believe that the Communist parties are today the only ardent advocates of increased social welfare. These parties attract and organize people already resentful because they feel that their present leadership and institutions perpetuate economic and racial injustices from which they suffer. The conditions which create that feeling can be, and should be, changed.

There was a time when the Western democracies were supreme in prestige because of their dynamic pursuit of liberty, equality, and fraternity; their great experiments in political freedom; and their industrial revolution, which added unimagined productivity to human effort. Today, because Soviet communism attacks freedom, we are drawn into defense of the *status quo*. We ought rather to preach and practice the unique capacity of a free society to effect changes peacefully. We ought to develop and make known constructive programs which will again capture the imagination and enlist the support of those who are unsatisfied, of those who feel themselves exploited, and of those who want to make dreams come true.

c. Still another of the conditions which tempt Soviet leadership to aggressive action is the possibility of frightening people from working against Soviet penetration. Today, even within the free societies of western Europe, many feel that they cannot, without great future risk of reprisal, express the dictates of their reason and conscience. That situation violates the provisions of the United Nations Charter which call for respect of human rights and require the nations to take joint and separate action in cooperation with the United Nations to secure the observance of those rights. Three years have gone by without any international commitment to that task. It is imperative that the United States take the lead, with those nations which are agreed on what human freedom means, to secure prompt adoption of a covenant of human rights, within the framework of the United Nations. If our nation should quickly assume dynamic leadership of a movement to define and protect human rights, even if only within the existing free societies, that action would do much to reassure peoples now frightened and to check the further spread of terrorism.

d. The avenues of diplomatic conversation between the Soviet Union and the United States should be



kept open and used. There should be the fullest possible exchange of information and of views on the assumption that all nations want peace, not war.

An appearance of broken official relations is psychologically bad for peace. It increases the risk that governments act on misinformation and make miscalculations which lead to perilous incidents. Also, it may be that some of the conflicts of national interest and issues of power can be dealt with by isolating them from irreconcilable conflicts of basic convictions.

We do not presume to judge the technical problems of when, and where, and with whom conversations should be held or negotiations conducted, but we suggest that there are in the field unused possibilities which ought to be explored. If trustworthy agreements could be arrived at between the Soviet Union and the United States, even on minor matters, the present world-wide sense of tension might be eased and the way made easier to preserve peace. The mood of the American people should be such as to encourage the Administration to utilize the possibilities of conversation and negotiation. Likewise, avenues of religious, cultural, scientific and educational exchange should be kept open and developed as far as possible.

It may be objected that the possibilities we have suggested do not meet our test of immediacy. We do not believe that such an objection is sound. Programs themselves have consequences even before they are fully realized. The European Recovery Plan is a good illustration. The idea had profound influence when it was first put forward by Secretary Marshall and quickly endorsed on a bipartisan basis. That occurrence changed the aspect of affairs in Europe more than nine months before the plan itself took legal shape. It is possible to get immediate results, which will decrease the threat of war, through economic, social, political and moral proposals which are well thought out and which it seems our nation is resolved to carry through.

*Our people ought, each one of them, to contribute to a change of mood so as to increase the chance of averting war without compromise of basic convictions.*

This is a time for prayer. Also it is a time for action. Men of good will must promptly lay hold of the means at hand to increase the margin of safety against war. This is a task in which every one can play a constructive part.

1. *Do not tolerate any complacency about war.*

Some of us may ourselves be complacent about war. If not, each of us knows some who are. So each one can do something to reduce the sum total of that complacency.

2. *Combat a mood of hysteria or blind hatred.*

Each of us is aware of focal points of war hysteria and blind hatred. We know who are some of the

individuals, groups, and publications that are spreading that mood. Each, by writing to political leaders or editors, can do something to stop the development of unreasoning mob emotion.

3. *Reject fatalism about war.*

Each of us knows some who think that war is inevitable and that it is better to get it over quickly so as to relieve the strain of waiting and to anticipate the Soviet development of atomic power. Each can do something to change that mood of fatalism and impatience.

4. *Oppose primary reliance on military strategy to meet Communist aggression.*

Each of us has, or can have, influence with leaders in Congress or in the Administration or in political parties and can urge that they do not concentrate on military measures as though these alone would assure peace, but concern themselves also with economic, social, political and moral counter-measures against the threat of war.

5. *Press for positive programs which have immediate possibilities for peace and justice.*

Each of us can use our voice and our vote in behalf of constructive measures by our government to increase the margin of safety from war, such as programs for recovery, for increased social welfare, for a covenant on human rights, and for continuing diplomatic conversation with the Soviet Union.

We belong to a free society. We cherish for ourselves and for others freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of petition, and freedom to vote. It is such freedoms which are threatened and which we want more fully to achieve and to preserve. Most of us would fight rather than surrender them, even though they might well be lost by fighting. These freedoms can, we are confident, be preserved if they are now used in ways to avert the immediate danger of war. In a free society every citizen has a duty of action.

*Our churches ought to testify with renewed vigor to God's righteous love for all men, and the reality of the Christian world fellowship.*

Christians have their own divine commission to proclaim the kingdom of God and His righteousness at home and abroad. God is a God of judgment as well as of mercy. In His sight all nations, including our own, and all men, including ourselves, have left undone those things which they ought to have done and done those things which they ought not to have done. We are called to recognize the just condemnation of His judgment but if we turn to Him in repentance and faith we shall avail ourselves of His mercy. We are called to be steadfast in prayer for all the peoples of the world that they may learn the things that belong to their peace; for our nation and our government, that they may become willing to serve the purposes of God.

Our churches are part of a world-wide commu-

nity of Christians. They have come into being as a universal fellowship in our own time through the work of the missionary movement and through the new discovery of the unity in Christ that binds Christians of many communions. Let us always remember the great company of fellow Christians in Russia with whom we share a common faith that should

transcend all the differences that make for conflict. Already in many places Christ has broken down the middle wall of partition in His Church, even where Christians have been divided by the enmities of war. We find our ultimate hope for peace in the faith that God, through Christ, is seeking to draw all men to Himself and into fellowship with one another.

## Protestant-Catholic Controversy

F. ERNEST JOHNSON

THE heated controversy going on between Protestants and Roman Catholics in this country is cause for heart-searching on both sides. To an on-looker, it often seems like a typical fight in which the main concern is to score points. This would, of course, be less than a fair judgment. But surely one is entitled to look for some common ethical frame of reference—some over-all Christian outlook—within which such controversy is carried on. Too frequently the sharp give and take make it seem almost incredible that the participants are both parts of the American Christian community. That the spectacle breeds cynicism about religion can hardly be doubted. Would it not be well if leaders on both sides would seek some basis of agreement upon which to conduct the controversy that would distinguish it from an ordinary political fight?

But this must not be a project in urbane self-deception. To attempt it in a Pollyanna spirit would get us precisely nowhere. Our differences are real, serious, and important. To tell each other across the table that we are all good fellows and brothers under the skin is a pleasant exercise but unless our differences are realistically faced the process is singularly devoid of durable results, and only serves to make the inevitable subsequent encounters more bitter. Nevertheless, a precondition of finding out what is significant and vital in our differences is the discovery of basic agreements to which these differences may be intelligently referred. The alternative to this process is a sort of guerrilla warfare which is as inconclusive as it is unedifying and unexemplary.

Moreover, the very process of locating common assumptions and purposes is the most fruitful way of defining basic differences. Consensus is logically prior to intelligent dissensus. And if the concept of Christendom has any meaning, it should be possible to find a common frame of reference for discussion between Protestants and Catholics.

A good test of our readiness for such an exploration is the way in which we read each other's controversial literature. If our primary purpose is to get ammunition for the next encounter we are operating on the lowest polemic level, not on a Christian level. Some self-scrutiny on both sides in this respect might be profitable. Also, if we write with

complete self-assurance, we evidence a failure to sense the full significance of the issues involved; and if we write with scorn, we betray a lack of that disciplined mood which is looked for in Christian discussion.

We on the Protestant side need to look much more deeply into the meaning of those elements in Catholic teaching and strategy which give us greatest concern. As every one knows, the focal point of conflict is the meaning and the requirements of religious freedom, particularly as it is involved in the relations of church and state. To say that our quarrel with Catholics is not essentially religious but political is true enough *from the Protestant point of view*. But is not this because we have a different conception of the church? Might a better understanding of the Catholic doctrine of the church put the controversy in a religious framework where it could be pursued in more authentic fashion? Probably most Catholics regarded the Protestant crusade for national prohibition as an unwarranted extension of religious effort into the political field. Yet Protestants, in general, at that time had no difficulty in deriving their political aim from the Christian ethic. Perhaps from the Catholic point of view the Protestant position on national prohibition looked something like the Catholic position on birth control as seen through Protestant eyes. In any case, we are all sadly in need of some common categories of thought and discourse.

A crucial difficulty arises out of the fact that historic Catholic teaching concerning the function of the church in the political sphere seems to run counter to the American conception of separation of functions as defined by the courts. But on this point there are two very important things for Protestants to remember.

The first of these is the fact that the precise meaning of separation of church and state is very far from clear. The latest deliverance of the Supreme Court, in the *McCullum* case, has been received by some Protestants with great satisfaction and by others with consternation. It is hardly too much to say that the several opinions leave the whole matter in as great confusion as existed before. This is not so much a criticism of the Court as recognition that we in America are involved in a painful

process of discovering what a principle too often stated in absolute terms can mean in practical operation if religion is to remain a free force in the life of the nation.

The second thing to note is the fact that the American Catholic hierarchy has, presumably in response to widespread demand for clarification of its position, made a new pronouncement. In January of this year Archbishop McNicholas, speaking as Chairman of the Administrative Board of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, said this:

"No group in America is seeking union of church and state; and least of all are Catholics. We deny absolutely and without any qualification that the Catholic Bishops of the United States are seeking a union of church and state by any endeavors whatsoever, either proximate or remote. If tomorrow Catholics constituted a majority in our country, they would not seek a union of church and state. They would then, as now, uphold the Constitution and all its Amendments, recognizing the moral obligation imposed on all Catholics to observe and defend the Constitution and its Amendments."

Our readers will doubtless ask how this statement is to be interpreted in the light of the letter by Archbishop Lucey quoted at length in the last issue of this magazine. He made the point, in substance, that what an overwhelming Catholic majority—as distinguished from a mere majority—might do is of only academic interest. Of course, Protestants do not so regard it. It should be noted that this letter was written before Archbishop McNicholas' statement was issued. Manifestly some further clarification is desirable. But the official pronouncement should be welcomed as a step in the direction of a better understanding between Catholics and Protestants, and a subject for friendly discussion. The quest for some common basis of agreement may well begin here.

## Grace and the Marshall Aid

EVOR ROBERTS

**I**F the Marshall aid, which most Americans rightly favor, is to succeed, it will take more grace than at present appears in the nations. The spiritual subtleties involved in both displaying and accepting generosity are peculiarly displayed in current behavior on both sides of the Atlantic.

Here in Britain one observes how difficult it is for an economically weak nation, once strong, to accept a helping hand from a strong nation that was once weak. The pride of age and experience seems to be more easily offended by a young helper flexing his biceps than would be the case if a contemporary oldster were the rescuing party. This delicate situation is rendered even more acute by a family relationship. Britain is in the position of a father past his prime who has exhausted the family

resources in defense of its existence and honor, and now is inwardly appalled by a son who in the process has grown wealthy, and proposes awkwardly and self-consciously to be the head of the family by virtue of his greater economic advantage. A parent's tender ego and a son's tactless helpfulness have ruined many a natural family relationship, and threaten now to foment dissension between Britain and America. The aid will be offered and accepted, but underneath may be feelings strong enough to jeopardize its very object.

One learns to summon all the tact at one's disposal in speaking of American financial help to a patriotic Briton. The safest strategy is ironically to adopt the language of the American businessman who looks at the aid as a "business proposition"—but for a different reason. The latter is intolerant of any element of "friendship" acting as a factor in the negotiations because friendship corrupts the purity of business relationships, while the Briton welcomes the idea of an impersonal "banking arrangement" in order to support his pride (making "gratitude" unnecessary), and to be reassured as to his essential solvency.

Ambassador Douglas was sensitive to this when he reminded the congressional committee recently of the pride of the European nations, that must be considered in the negotiations. This pride, of course, plays havoc with Britain's current efforts to make the nation financially secure, and is most plainly to be seen in the Opposition's incredibly blind assignment of Britain's troubles to the mismanagement of the Labor Government—the assumption being that the strength of the empire is essentially unchanged. Mr. Churchill was determined not to "preside at the liquidation of the empire"; he seems just now to be equally determined to be blind to the wartime liquidation of its foreign assets and the threat to its internal economy through the deterioration of its trading position. Churchill's unadjusted imperial mentality gives voice to the national pride which makes it impossible for many British people to see that the lion has given way to the eagle in economic if not in other matters.

The grace needed to disintegrate this pride is fortunately partly provided through the very force of difficult circumstances. In the realistic calculation of these circumstances by Britain's present leaders, and the indication especially in the character of Sir Stafford Cripps that she is determined to be a nation of rigorously *honest* shopkeepers, there is reason to believe that the parent's tender pride will not be the major source of family contention.

The greater danger lies in the graceless behavior of the wealthy son just coming into his prime. Americans may rebel at Douglas' admonition, asserting in one way or another that a begging parent can hardly afford to be proud, but what is needed now is that attention be paid to our own incomparably dangerous spiritual position. Jesus, had he been



speaking of America, would certainly not have weakened his metaphor in observing that a camel could squeeze through the eye of a needle more felicitously than a rich man into the kingdom of God! Especially if a rich man is in the precarious spiritual position of a philanthropist. Americans who boast not only of our efficient capitalistic system as the source of our superior wealth, but also expand on our philanthropic intentions in sharing its fruits with our "less efficient" neighbors, give evidence enough of a consciousness of virtue far more in need of grace than is the humbled neighbor. When this sharing is accompanied by tactless reminders to the neighbor to remember that he *has* been humbled, together with patronizing commendations of the "humanely operated poorhouse" (*Time*, Feb. 23rd) that he lives in, the need for grace is patently obvious.

## The World Church: News and Notes

### FRANCE: News of the C.I.M.A.D.E.

Ever since C.I.M.A.D.E. (Comité Inter-Mouvements auprès des Evacués) was founded in October, 1939, it has tried to give material relief and to bring the Christian message to war-victims, on an interdenominational basis.

Its evangelization work takes the form of practical help to people in difficult circumstances; this being an essential expression of the Love taught in the Christian message. It is considered indispensable that the team-workers should live among the people whom they wish to serve, in order to understand them and be understood by them.

The work is undertaken in teams of two or three young men and girls, who live and work together. Their spiritual unity—due to the working of the Holy Spirit and not to an easy human agreement—is the first form of their witness. "That they may be one, that the world may believe."

The Cimade teams are interdenominational and international in character. They include 45 Frenchmen, 8 Americans, 8 Swiss, one Canadian, one Swede, one Dutchman, one Englishman, one Russian—members of the Reformed, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Baptist, Anglican and Orthodox Churches. Most of the team-workers meet once a year in two camps where, in a community of prayer and study, they plan their future work together. Its centers of activity at the present time are as follows:

(1) *Refugees*—At present there are 600,000 refugees in France—displaced persons, Spaniards and refugees from Central and Eastern Europe. A social center in Paris sees 800 to 1,200 persons a month and deals with the question of their papers, work, emigration, and allocations from the International Refugee Organization. About 200 homes are visited each month. There is a club for these refugees which arranges friendly meetings for them.

There are two receiving centers at Bièvres and Bellevue (95 beds) which take in the most destitute refugees for a few weeks or months, and there they

While it is more blessed to give than to receive, Americans must look for the spiritual resources to do it graciously. Above all, it requires what the psalmist (Ps. 49) knew, a religious perspective above the unmerited providential circumstances of either being wealthy or being poor. Those "who trust in their wealth and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches" not only defy the Lord as presumptuous stewards, but they thereby render themselves incapable of employing their wealth effectively. "For none of them can by any means redeem his brother." That is in God's hands, says the psalmist. Can America remember this, while she spends billions for the redemption of Western Europe? If she can (with the help of more of God's grace than we now see), He may employ *His* wealth effectively.

find a Christian family-life. A center for students and apprentices will be opened at Sèvres in a few weeks. A center for teaching trades to young Spanish boys has been working since January at Chambon-sur-Lignon.

(2) *French people who have been victims of misfortunes*—Thirteen centers have been organized in 20 barracks given by the World Council of Churches and the "Don Suisse." Cimade arranges cultural and educational activities and Bible studies for these people, and distributes medical supplies, food and clothes. In addition to material help, Cimade tries to help in the spiritual reconstruction of the civilian, family and personal life of these people who have lost their homes. Groups of converts are forming in several places.

(3) *Workmen in ports and ship-yards*—Many of these workmen are uprooted: Frenchmen, Arabs, foreigners from all sorts of countries who are separated from their families and are subject to all the temptations of isolation. Arrangements are being made for them to have clubs and a dormitory on barges (at Le Havre).

(4) *The free German workers*—They are welcomed in many of the centers, where Cimade tries to put them in touch with French people and to offer them some kind of social and spiritual background.

(5) *French and foreign Jews*—A Bible circle meets once a month with about thirty members.

(6) *Legal and political prisoners*—There are still about 30,000 of these in 7 penitentiaries. In some of the model-prisons the penitential system is being reformed, in order to re-educate the prisoners morally and train them for fresh work. The Cimade teams are working in these establishments as social assistants, teachers or visitors.

(7) *The German students in Mainz* in the university hostels run by Cimade. E. P. S., Geneva.

### SWEDEN: Proposed Reforms for Religious Instruction in Public Schools

Proposed reforms in the system of teaching religion in Swedish public schools were outlined recently by

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Mrs. Alva Myrdal, member of the Parliamentary Commission on Educational Reform.

Specific reform proposals include the elimination of dogmatics in the early educational years; emphasis upon the relation of religious teaching to the problems of everyday living; and the introduction of variety in the ceremony of morning prayers.

On questions of defining God, the teacher would take into account the varied backgrounds and beliefs of both children and parents, and stress that people have differing beliefs.

The reform program would also include the teaching of some beliefs of other religions, and the value of non-Christian heroes would be recognized. Finally, while examples and stories would be stressed to pupils, not all of these would necessarily come from the Bible. However, dramatic events from the life of Christ and the Old Testament would be particularly emphasized for children between 11 and 15 years of age.

Mrs. Myrdal said the present situation in Sweden involves "tension between a society which is growing increasingly secular, much more so than the United States, and a school religious education system which corresponds to the situation 300 years ago. That tension must somehow be released." (RNS)

## INDIA: First Synod of the Church of South India

The first Synod of the new Church of South India, inaugurated at Madras last September, held its first meeting in Madura, March 5-10, 1948.

The tragic events of recent months in India have made plain that the problems of Indian independence and of the world "demand a solution more radical than anything which can be done in the purely political sphere," the Synod declared in a lengthy statement on evangelism. The declaration was made as the Synod called on all of the new dioceses to consider what evangelistic work can be done today in India and "to decide how such work might be begun immediately, with the cooperation of pastorates and Christian institutions."

The future of mission activity in India lies in the use of the Ashram, the Indian-style cell in which people live, work and worship together. In the immediate years to come, the Christian evangelist to Hindu India should more and more adopt the underlying principle of the Ashram strategy in planning his campaign. The work of the church in India is hampered for two main reasons: it gives an impression of being foreign in organization and control, and it savors too much of professionalism in the sense that it is being manned by workers who are paid.

"Hatred, suspicion, injustice, corruption can only be overcome by the discovery of new spiritual resources," the resolution said. "The services which Christians have rendered and are rendering have won the recognition of many among the leaders and the people of India. God challenges the church today to commend in act and in word His Gospel of universal redemption, the redeeming love of God in Christ which is for the healing of the nations." The resolution said that the arrival of Indian independence has freed Christianity of "certain suspicions and misunderstandings which hampered its work" and "given an unparalleled opportunity." E. P. S., Geneva.

## Author in This Issue

*Rev. Evor Roberts, after serving through the war as a chaplain in the army, is now taking graduate work at the University of Edinburgh.*

## Correction

We regret very much that the introductory note to Archbishop Lucey's article on "The Catholic Position on Church and State" (April 26th issue), contained several errors which either changes the meaning of our introduction, or makes it obscure.

The concluding sentence should have read: *The exposition makes it quite clear in what sense official Catholic doctrine stands in contradiction to our constitutional separation of church and state and also why Catholics believe that this contradiction is not an immediate or even a remote peril to the principles of freedom embodied in our Constitution.*

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